

Swedish American Genealogist

Volume 31 | Number 4

Article 2

12-1-2011

A Wisconsin pioneer

Jörgen Vessman

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.augustana.edu/swensonsag>



Part of the [Genealogy Commons](#), and the [Scandinavian Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Vessman, Jörgen (2011) "A Wisconsin pioneer," *Swedish American Genealogist*: Vol. 31 : No. 4 , Article 2.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.augustana.edu/swensonsag/vol31/iss4/2>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Augustana Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Swedish American Genealogist by an authorized editor of Augustana Digital Commons. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@augustana.edu.

A Wisconsin pioneer – and more stories

An immigrant from Fellingsbro finds her new home

By JÖRGEN VESSMAN

In the September 2009 issue of SAG I had the favor of having an old picture published. I gave some background and was eager to know if anyone among the readers was able to recognize anything from that.

In February 2010 I got some very positive messages in my e-mail box about my request. Someone had apparently been given this article at a meeting and was then engaged in submitting it to my presumptive relatives. Soon I also got into contact with them and obtained information about the father and grandfather.

A couple of months later I received a letter from Jim Smugala in Catwaba not far from Ogema (Wisc.), where my early relatives had settled. He knew about the men who had been cutting trees in this area and also knew the name of the photographer, N. Nelson, as well as that the camps were occupied by migrating people. He also had comments on the cover picture in the December 2009 issue. Moreover, he sent me two small articles written by a daughter of Fredrick Wester, Cecelia Wester Stanke. I have never corresponded with her, but one of my cousins, now passed away, very often talked about Cecelia, who was very interested in local history. The first of the articles described the start of the local school in Ogema, which first was held in the kitchen of one family before a log cabin was erected for that purpose. The title of the booklet was "Echoes from the Woodland." The second article was devoted to her mother who celebrated her 80th birthday 30 Aug 1954. It describes the departure from Sweden and the early years in the new homeland. The name of Cecelia's mother was Emma

Jacobson, b. 1874 Aug.30. She immigrated in 1882 with her parents. Her husband to be, Adolf Fredrick Wester, left in 1888, and they both came from Fellingsbro in Örebro county. Jim Smugala also pointed out that there were quite a number of other immigrants in this region that came from Fellingsbro.

The ancestors of Emma Jacobson (1) were:

Generation I

2) Her father, *Karl Johan Jakobs-son*, was born 4 Oct 1841 in Rynninge, Fellingsbro, and died in Ogema in 1910. He was married to

3) *Karolina Stål*, born 21 Oct 1839 in Korrvike, Fellingsbro, and she died 1900 in Ogema. Emma was their only child.

Generation II

4) *Jakob Olsson*, born 29 Aug 1813

in Rynninge, Fellingsbro, and married to

5) *Anna Andersdotter*, born 22 Jan 1803 in Åby, Fellingsbro.

6) *Lars Stål*, born 22 Oct 1808 in Ullersäter, Näsby parish, close to Fellingsbro. He was a hussar, which also is mentioned in Emma's short story. Stål was the fifth and next youngest of the children. He was married to

7) *Anna Larsdotter*, born 14 Apr 1810 in Hosta, Fellingsbro.

Generation III

8) *Olof Andersson*, born 1 Oct 1777 in Rynninge, Fellingsbro, and married to

9) *Cajsa Larsdotter*, born 4 Oct 1781 in Sellinge, Fellingsbro.

10) *Anders Bengtsson*, born 8 Jun 1764 in Åby, Fellingsbro, and married to

11) *Stina Larsdotter* born 1765 in Fellingsbro.



Fellingsbro is situated in Örebro län, right on the border to Västmanland, and belongs to the kommun of Lindesberg. The very thin lines are the parish borders as they were in 1992.

12) *Olof Andersson*, born 11 Febr 1766 in Ullersäter, Näsby, and married to

13) *Cajsa Söderbom*, born 25 Sept 1772 in Spånga, Fellingsbro. Her father was also enrolled in the cavalry.

14) *Lars Larsson*, born 28 July 1773 in Hosta, Fellingsbro, and married to

15) *Stina Andersdotter*, born 16 Aug 1783 in Hosta, Fellingsbro.



A typical old house in Fellingsbro.



The Fellingsbro church, which used to be the center of the parish, but now is situated about a mile from the town, due to the location of the railway station.

The Wester family in Ogema

Emma and Fredrick raised 7 children in Ogema as follows:

Emma Wester, b. twin 7 Sept 1894

Ruth Wester, b. twin 7 Sept 1894

Anna Wester, b. 6 Sept 1897

Ebba Wester, b. 8 Febr 1899

Elsie Wester, b. 27 Aug 1903

Cecelia Wester, b. 14 Mar 1909

Fredrick E. Wester, b. 6 Aug 1914.

With this background I hope you will enjoy the article that Cecelia wrote with the title “Emma, going on Eight.” It is given below.

The author:

Jörgen Wessman
Lekevallsgatan 54
S-431 39 Mölndal, Sweden
jorgen.vessman@alfa.telenordia.se

Emma, going on eight....

BY CECELIA WESTER STANKE (WRITTEN IN 1954)

My mother's people were peasant farmers in central Sweden. Because my grandfather had belonged to the cavalry of the King's army, upon retirement he had been granted a small cottage and a lot which would be his for the duration of his life. It was a small house of two rooms with heavy oak beams in the ceiling. This was my mother's birthplace and her home for a little more than seven years. Recollections of this faraway place are now only fleeting and separated memories. I have heard mother tell how her mother herded and milked the cows of the richer farmers and so was given milk, butter, and cheese for her family. I have heard her tell how her father did carpentry work and so earned enough money to buy the few groceries and clothes that were absolutely necessary. There was always the unfulfilled desire for a little land of their own. No wonder

that news of homestead land in America was so eagerly relayed from one to another. No wonder that Grandpa Jacobson made plans to break all ties with the homeland and make a new life for himself, his wife, and little Emma in America.

So it happened that when Emma was seven she was on her way to this new home. In the Swedish language, birthday means not just the anniversary of one's birth. It is the beginning of a new year, and as such, the stress is not as we place it in our way of talking. Emma was not just seven – she was going on eight, and thus a birthday always sets goals for the next year.

For a little blonde, blue-eyed girl the preparations for a trip to a new continent must have been exciting. The few precious belongings that would be taken with them were packed into a homemade trunk, fastened with hinges and straps.

Since they were to travel in lower class accommodations, they had to have a supply of their own food for the entire trip. Hard dark brown homemade bread, cheese, and some dried beef were packed for the voyage. This food had to suffice for the boat and train trip. Mother has often spoken of the meager food supply – but always just as fact – never as if it represented any particular hardship. Mother's childhood was lacking in luxuries that our children of today are brought up to expect as a matter of course; but it was also filled with the real and personal adventures which our children must get second-hand from radio and motion pictures. The children of those days were participants, whereas our children must be content with being spectators.

The boat that took my mother to America was a steamer of the Cunard Line. The boat left from Göteborg,